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SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: WTO DG RACE - LAMY AND PEREZ DEL CASTILLO TO BE FINAL CANDIDATES

1. The General Council chair, Ambassador Mohamed of Kenya, held informal consultations on the evening of April 29 to present the results of the second round of consultations over the selection and appointment of the next WTO Director-General. She recalled the procedures for selecting a Director-General, and she paid tribute to Brazil and Ambassador Seixas Correa for accepting the results of the first round of consultations, explaining that Brazil's willingness to abide by the agreed procedures has helped keep the process "smoothly moving forward on its own track, without disruption to the substantive business of the Doha Development Agenda." She said that all Members, and all candidates, are united in their view that the WTO's top priority is the successful conclusion of the upcoming Ministerial Conference in Hong Kong.

2. The chair then presented the results of round two, announcing that candidate from Mauritius, Jaya Krishna Cuttaree, is the least likely candidate of the three to attract consensus. She further added that, based on the information presented in this round, Pascal Lamy is the candidate that enjoyed the highest level of support among Members, both in terms of preferences and in breadth of support. 144 of the 148 Members provided views in this round; of these, 122 are Geneva-based, and 22 are non-resident delegations. Of the four Members that did not express views, only one is a non-resident delegation.

3. The chair then announced that the third and final round of consultations will begin during the week of 9 May, and it will be based on a revised slate of the two remaining candidates - Pascal Lamy of France and Carlos Perez del Castillo of Uruguay. She reminded Members that views expressed during the first two rounds of consultations will not be used in the final round, and she urged all Members to come forward and express the views of their respective authorities regarding the question, "what are your preferences?" She explained that she hoped to conclude the third and final round of consultations as soon as possible, keeping in mind that a final decision is to be taken by May 31 at the latest.

4. At the end of her prepared statement, she informed the Members that Cuttaree has withdrawn his candidacy. She paid tribute to Cuttaree and his government for being gracious in accepting the results of the process and "leading by example." There were no comments or statements from the floor. Daily